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ABSTRACT

An analysis of academic intransigence (resistance to change) in educational administrative preparation programs is presented in this paper. Drawing upon two conceptual frameworks, the stakeholder perspective and Porter's (1980) five-force model of industry structure and competitive influence, two factors contributing to academic intransigence are identified: (1) academic norms and the reward system of higher education institutions; and (2) low rivalry and low threat of entrants due to the predicted decline in available professors. A conclusion is that unless reform of administrator preparation programs are based on an awareness of what professors do and why, meaningful change is unlikely. One figure of the model of forces affecting academic intransigence is included. (19 references) (LMI)

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LIMITATIONS ON CHANGE: CURRENT CONDITIONS INFLUENCING ACADEMIC INTRANSIGENCE IN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION PREPARATION PROGRAMS

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ABSTRACT

In spite of recent recommendations for reform in educational administration preparation programs (e.g. Cooper & Boyd, 1988; Griffiths, Stout & Forsyth, 1988; Pitner, 1988), there seems to be resistance to reform among the educational administration professoriate (Logan & Ellett, 1988; McCarthy, Kuh, Newell, Iacona, 1988). The purpose of this paper is to analyze factors which may contribute to academic intransigence among educational administration professors using two conceptual frameworks--a stakeholder perspective (Freeman, 1984) and Porter's (1980) model of industry structure.

Results of the analysis suggest that the culture and reward system of academia as well as the decreasing supply of educational administration professors may be two of the most potent factors to influence academic intransigence with respect to educational administration preparation program reform.

LIMITATIONS ON CHANGE: CURRENT CONDITIONS INFLUENCING ACADEMIC INTRANSIGENCE IN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION PREPARATION PROGRAMS

Numerous papers have emphasized the need for reform in educational administration preparation programs (e.g., Cooper & Boyd, 1988; Griffiths, Stout, & Forsyth, 1988; Pitner, 1988). These reform recommendations have included particular concern for revised and relevant curriculum in educational administration, improvement of competency among administrators, and increased research and scholarly attention to problems of practice. However, recent research suggests that there is resistance or limited attention given to program reform among educational administration professors (Logan & Ellett, 1988; McCarthy, 1988). Further, little systematic attention has been given to understanding the reasons for academic intransigence--the resistance to change in preparation programs--among the educational administration professoriate.

To understand and explain academic intransigence among educational administration professors, several questions must be considered. What factors contribute to academic intransigence? How might characteristics of academia and the educational administration professoriate interact with environmental and competitive influences to withstand pressure to restructure and reform preparation programs?

Conceptual Framework

The following analysis of academic intransigence among the educational administration professors will draw upon the following two conceptual frameworks: 1) A stakeholder perspective (Freeman, 1984) for understanding relationships between an enterprise and its environment; and 2) Porter's (1980) five-force model of industry structure and competitive influence.

Originally, the stakeholder concept was defined as "those groups

without whose support the organization would cease to exist" (see Freeman, 1984, p. 31). This concept has been variously redefined and refined by organizational theorists whose research has explored the relationship between an organization and its environment. Much of this research suggests that the relationship between an enterprise and its various stakeholder groups is typically a reciprocal relationship--each affecting and being affected by the other (Freeman, 1984). Therefore, for the purposes of this paper, stakeholders will be defined as those groups in the environment which can affect or be affected by the professoriate's accomplishment of its objectives --research, teaching, and service in educational administration (Freeman, 1984).

A second relevant conceptual framework is Porter's (1980) five-force model of industry structure. This model focuses on the level of competition within an industry--that is, the degree of influence that is exerted on the enterprise by different competitor forces in an industry. Traditionally, Porter's model has been applied to for-profits industries. However, the model has been shown to be applicable in analyzing non-profit industries as well (Oviatt & Miller, 1988). The five forces identified within Porter's (1980) model are:

1. The bargaining power of buyers (customers) of the industry's products or services.
2. The conditions governing rivalry among incumbent industry competitors.
3. The bargaining power of suppliers relative to those competitors.
4. The likelihood that potential entrants into the industry will siphon profits from current players.
5. The price and performance of substitute products and services.

The combined strength of these forces shape the marketplace competition for the enterprise. If the combined strength of the forces is relatively low, the enterprise will have little incentive to change its product (or service). If the strength of the combined forces is quite high or intense, the enterprise may be faced with changing the product or service it provides to avoid being eliminated.

These two frameworks provide a systematic means to increase our understanding of factors that can potentially influence the degree of academic intransigence exhibited by educational administration professors with respect to preparation program reform. Figure 1 depicts an integrative model of the influence relationships between dominant stakeholder groups, the industry structure, and the receptivity of the educational administration professoriate to preparation program reform--academic intransigence. The proposed model serves only as an organizational framework for understanding variables and relationships affecting academic intransigence and does not imply causal relationships.

Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis for this paper will be educational administration professors - not departments of educational administration or schools of education. The reason for this choice is the recognition that university professors often have strong influence and autonomy in higher education. Professors staff committees and task forces that make many of the organization's key decisions--especially personnel and program decisions. Professors often fill administrative posts for temporary periods of time, resulting in potentially greater control or influence in the decision-making process.

Additionally, professors have a great deal of autonomy in the research, teaching, and service dimensions of the organization. It may be argued that the basic functions and mission of universities (products and services provided) are significantly controlled by professors (e.g., in their choices of research projects, teaching materials and methods, and service activities) [Hardy, Langley, Mintzberg & Rose, 1988]. This degree of autonomy and control over university decision-making and organizational functions is in sharp contrast to that of many non-administrative professional employees in commercial organizations. Conversely, university administrators may have relatively less control in academia than do their counterparts in commercial organizations. For these reasons, educational administration professors (rather than departments of educational administration or schools of education) seem warranted as the unit of analysis.

Stakeholder Groups

All enterprises - public or private, profit-oriented or not-for-profit, large or small - must consider elements that comprise their environment (Bedeian, 1986). One method suggested for understanding the relationship between an enterprise and its environment is to consider the various stakeholder groups - both internal and external - that can either affect or be affected by the accomplishment of its objectives. These groups may include consumers, suppliers, competitors, and society (Freeman, 1984). Important stakeholder groups in the environment of educational administration professors might include: 1) students; 2) various educational organizations such as schools and state educational agencies; 3) the employing institution and other higher education institutions; and 4) societal stakeholder groups such as legislative, political, and government groups, business corporations and

private foundations. The relative importance of each of these stakeholder groups in influencing or affecting educational administration professors may vary considerably. Additionally, the stakeholder groups may have direct and/or indirect influence on professors.

Students. Students may be viewed as both consumers of and suppliers for the products and services of educational administration professors. As consumers, educational administration students are likely to have a direct effect on professors in their demand for advising and teaching (and the consequent credentialing); whereas, students may have only an indirect effect on professors as consumers of research and external service.

Students' demand for a professor's teaching and advising could hypothetically be a strong influence on a professor to offer high quality and relevant coursework in the preparation program. However, because the teaching and service dimensions of a professor's work are often less highly valued and rewarded by higher education institutions than is the research dimension of his/her work (Clark, 1989; Oviatt & Miller, 1988), the influence of students as consumers of teaching may be relatively less potent than the influence of the employing institution's norms and reward system (see discussion below of higher education institution as stakeholder).

In fact, students' demand for teaching may actually be a reverse incentive for professors to be responsive to student instructional needs. That is, if a professor's teaching does not speak to the needs of his/her students, then course enrollments and advisee numbers could conceivably drop, allowing a professor more time for research and scholarly publication--thus enabling the professor to conform to the more powerful institutional norms and reward system. Additionally, because students are ultimately dependent on

professors for their degrees and credentialing in educational administration, the power of students to affect change in a professor's work accomplishments may be relatively less than the power of a professor to affect change in his/her students' academic success.

As suppliers, students may provide a professor with ideas and labor--especially in a professor's fulfillment of her/his research and service endeavors. Students are often used as resources for ideas and labor in accomplishing a professor's scholarship and external service obligations. As such, students may be a valued or even necessary commodity to a professor and, consequently, may have some influence or effect on a professor's accomplishment of his/her objectives.

However, personal observation would suggest that only the "best and brightest" students are likely to be valued by a professor as a source of ideas and labor. Stronger and more talented students offer the promise of higher quality ideas and labor while costing a professor relatively less time to train to meet his/her "supply" needs. Consequently, as suppliers of ideas and labor, only the strongest students may be able to influence change in a professor's work and accomplishments. If these students are in sufficient demand as a resource among professors, those professors who are most responsive to students' instructional needs may have greater availability of a limited supply.

On balance, students probably have relatively less influence and effect on a professor's accomplishment of her/his objectives than do the institutional norms and reward system in higher education. Further, with the exception of the most capable cadre of students, students have little power to influence a change in a professor's work relative to the power of a professor

to influence a change in students' academic success. Therefore, professors may feel little pressure or incentive to reform preparation programs to accommodate the needs of students as a stakeholder group.

Schools and Other Educational Organizations. Schools and other educational agencies may influence professors' responsiveness to reform as consumers, suppliers, and perhaps competitors. These outside educational organizations may be consumers of a professor's research, student "products", and professional services. Those professors whose work is viewed as valuable and relevant to the mission of these organizations may be in high demand as an on-going source of expertise and as a supplier of well-trained administrators. Further, these external organizations have the power to "reward" a professor with a supply of quality students, consulting contracts, funded grants, and research data and agendas. In all instances, these rewards are only valuable to a professor (and powerful enough to influence his/her accomplishments) if they do not run counter to the employing institution's norms and reward system. However, to the degree that they are consistent with the expectations of the employing institution, these outside organizations have the power to affect the accomplishments of a professor.

Schools and other educational agencies may also be viewed as potential competitors to the educational administration professoriate. Some schools and state education agencies have begun to offer more "in-house" training programs for administrators--usually as supplements to university academic work, and in fewer instances, in lieu of university preparation programs (e.g., Los Angeles Co. Schools). Large school districts or state agencies may also staff research divisions to do applied research to address a school district's or educational agency's particular research needs. A more common source of

competition for professors is the service or consulting work of professionals within and among various types of educational organizations. These potential trends may parallel emerging non-university training and service trends in business and industry (Lynton, 1984 as cited in Oviatt & Miller, 1988). However, at present, schools and other educational agencies may pose more of an impending threat of competition than a reality to professors. The degree to which these outside educational organizations develop products and services in direct competition to those of professors may be dependent on professors' responsiveness to educational administration program reform.

In sum, schools and other external educational organizations may have most power to affect the accomplishments of a professor as consumers of a professor's products and services and as a supplier of student, research, and financial resources. These external agencies may be especially able to influence professors' responsiveness to educational administration program reform when their consumer needs for professors' work and their supply contributions to professors' accomplishments are consistent with the expectations of higher education institutions. However, at present, these outside organizations do not wield particularly strong influence on professors as a source of direct competition.

Employing Higher Education Institutions. Higher education institutions are able to influence the work of professors as suppliers of rewards--employment, promotion and tenure, salaries and other pecuniary benefits, and support for academic pursuits such as research, teaching, and service. Although the historical basis for these rewards was a professor's accomplishments in three areas--research, teaching, and service, rewards have

come to be more dependent on the research and scholarly productivity of a professor than on his/her teaching and service accomplishments.

In an exploration of the American professoriate, Clark (1989) states that with every passing decade the system of rewarding academics on the grounds of research and published scholarship has become more deeply rooted in universities, would-be-universities, and leading four-year colleges. Campus promotion committees continue their steady scrutiny of the record of research and scholarship. Deans and department chairs place increasing emphasis on research publication in awarding salary increments to faculty. Higher education administrators work actively to build an institutional culture on the basis of the reputation of noted scholars.

Regardless of what institutions may state in formal employment policies, research and publication are what universities reward through the allocation of resources and recognition to departments and to individual professors (Oviatt & Miller, 1988). What is important to note is the substantial influence that universities have on professors by virtue of the academic culture and reward system. Because this influence on professors is direct, is pervasive in their day-to-day work environment, and has immediate implications for their livelihood and professional success, educational administration professors are probably more responsive to the expectations of employing higher education institutions than to any other stakeholder group.

Further, the academic culture and reward system of universities often does not reenforce many of the recommendations for educational administration preparation program reform. In particular, universities may not place a high priority (through academic norms and rewards) on curriculum revision and other administrator preparation endeavors, improvement of practice, or field-

relevant applied research. Because the academic culture and reward system of employing higher education institutions are often in opposition to efforts to reform educational administration preparation programs, as well as being in competition for a professor's time and energy, the influence of employing higher education institutions contributes significantly to academic intransigence.

Societal Stakeholder Groups. Various societal stakeholder groups such as legislative, political, and government groups, business corporations and private foundations may influence educational administration professors as either consumers or suppliers. These groups may create a demand for various and specific types of research or service endeavors of professors, depending on the group's mission. These groups also may be in a position to supply professors with research grants, service contracts, or other funding to accomplish their professional objectives. State legislatures, in particular, may assure educational administration professors a supply of students by establishing administrator certification requirements that must be met through university preparation programs.

It is difficult to assess the strength of these various societal stakeholders groups to influence the work of professors toward program reform. As with the influence of other educational organizations, these agencies are probably most powerful when their influence as consumers or suppliers is congruent with the expectations of the employing higher education institutions. That is, if research, service, grants, contracts, or other external funding associated with these societal organizations is seen as valuable by the employing institution, then the societal stakeholder group may be able to strongly influence professors toward relevant reform endeavors.

If, however, the interests of societal stakeholder groups are in conflict with those of the higher education institutions, then the academic institutions will probably have more influence on professors due to the direct and immediate effects of the day-to-day work environment.

Summary of Stakeholder Influences

In review, employing higher education institutions probably have most power to affect the accomplishments of professors' work objectives through current academic norms and reward systems. Because these norms and reward systems often run counter to many of the aims of educational administration preparation program reform, this internal stakeholder group probably contributes most to academic intransigence. External educational organizations and other societal stakeholder groups have the potential to affect professors toward reform only when their influence as consumers or suppliers of professors' products and services is congruent with the expectations of higher education institutions. Consequently, their influence is probably only moderate. Student groups are probably least able to influence professors toward program reform in educational administration. The net effect is that professors have little incentive to address or meet program reform recommendations due to the influence of various stakeholder groups. Thus, a stakeholder perspective offers a possible explanation for academic intransigence in the educational administration professoriate.

Industry Structure

Another explanatory framework for academic intransigence among educational administration professors is the structure of the industry in which they function (the educational administration research, teaching, and service industry). Whereas the stakeholder perspective examines the differing

influences of significant groups in the environment of an industry, the industry structure perspective analyzes the level of competition within an industry by examining five elements of the industry structure--customers, rivalry, suppliers, entrants, and substitute products and services (Porter, 1980). The industry structure framework has been applied to an analysis of academic intransigence in business education, and strongly parallels this same analysis (Oviatt & Miller, 1988).

Because there is some commonality between these two conceptual frameworks, some of the influences of these five competitor forces have been discussed from a stakeholder perspective and will be addressed only briefly in the discussion to follow. Further, when the industry structure framework is applied to the professoriate enterprise, a discussion of these five forces is more parsimoniously collapsed to three categories--rivalry and the threat of entrants, power of customers and suppliers, and substitute products and services.

Rivalry and the Threat of Entrants. Rivalry and threat of entrants are related forces which influence the degree of competition among professors. The Chronicle of Higher Education (September 6, 1989) reports that for higher education in general, the decline in faculty compensation and the deterioration in working conditions are making it difficult to attract capable individuals to careers in academe. A decline in the number of Ph.D.'s selecting a career in academe has been noted, along with a decreasing interest in professorial roles by college freshmen (Bowen & Schuster, 1986). Higher education institutions are facing a problematic forecast of a shortage of highly qualified faculty members in the next decade (Chronicle of Higher Education, September 6,1989).

In the educational administration professoriate, a large number of faculty retirements are anticipated within the next 10 to 15 years, causing forecasters to expect a substantial turnover in the educational administration professoriate (McCarthy, 1988). Tallerico (1988) reports that for the 63 educational administration faculty searches reported to have been conducted in 1987, the median number of applicants-per-search was 31, compared to 40 applicants-per-search in 1983. Although speculative in nature, these trends strongly suggest an increased demand for professors in educational administration. This condition could contribute to relatively low rivalry among educational administration professors.

The supply side of the faculty turnover equation also may contribute to low threat of entrants among educational administration professors. There is an apparent decline in the number of educational administration programs which are preparing future professors. In a study of the educational administration professoriate, Campbell and Newell (1973) reported that slightly over half of the 1972 respondents indicated that their programs were oriented more towards preparing practitioners, with the remainder focused on the preparation of professors or on the preparation of both professors and practitioners. By contrast, the McCarthy et. al. study (1988) found that 78% of the 1986 survey respondents indicated that their programs were designed to prepare practitioners. Similar results were obtained by Logan and Ellett (1988), in which, 89% of the UCEA deans and department chairs responding to the survey indicated that the primary focus of their educational administration department was the preparation of public/private school practitioners (e.g., principals, superintendents). Thus, this "self-neglect" of the educational

administration professoriate to "regenerate itself" may be contributing to the short supply of professors and to low threat of entrants within the industry.

A low degree of rivalry and low threat of entrants among educational administration professors has important implications for the balance between stakeholder groups and professors. If professors develop increased bargaining power relative to students, external educational organizations, employing institutions, and societal groups, they may use this power to jockey for positions and resources, with little concern for calls from these various stakeholder groups to improve preparation programs. On the other hand, if professors develop relatively more power than their respective stakeholder groups--especially employing higher education institutions, they may be in a more powerful position to change preparation programs and to alter the academic culture and reward systems that may be presently impeding preparation program reform endeavors.

It is difficult to predict the direction that this power imbalance may take. A clue may lie in the interests and attitudes of newer entrants into the educational administration professoriate. The McCarthy et. al. study (1988) indicated that newer professors were more interested in and spent more time on research-related activities than did their more experienced cohorts. And, although they identified curriculum reform as the most important issue facing the professoriate, they were equally complacent about preparation program reform as their more experienced cohorts. Perhaps because proportionately more new professors were female, this group did spend more time in university committee work than did their counterparts. Work by Shakeshaft (1987) suggests that this committee work may reflect women's interest in change through collaboration. The implications of these attitudes

and interests are difficult to predict, but these results would tend to suggest that newer professors, because of their socialization into the existing academic culture, may not be interested in using their increased bargaining power due to low rivalry and low threat of entrants to change the status quo in preparation programs.

Customers and Suppliers. This force focuses on the degree of power that the customers (buyers) and suppliers can exert on educational administration professors. As noted previously, for educational administration professors, the customers and the suppliers are often the same stakeholder groups. Therefore, a discussion of the power of these groups will be presented together.

For students, this force may remain relatively low. Enrollment trends and forecasts for American higher education project that college and university enrollments will remain fairly stable through 1991, in spite of recent changes in the demography of the student body--e.g., a steady growth in enrollments of older students, increasing numbers of part-time students, and large increases in the enrollments of women and minorities (Trow, 1988). College enrollment projections for 1989 to 1993, by the Chronicle of Higher Education (Sept. 6, 1989) for total enrollment and for undergraduate and graduate levels also remain fairly stable.

Most programs in educational administration have "open admissions", with a baccalaureate degree the only prerequisite (Griffiths, Stout & Forsyth, 1988). Although many graduate programs require applicants to submit GRE scores or Miller Analogies Scores, these scores may not be used to select students. If entrance requirements exist at all, they are not very competitive and most applicants are accepted (Peterson & Finn, 1988).

According to James Guthrie, one in thirty applicants in California is rejected from administration programs (as reported in Peterson & Finn). Thus, one could speculate that low admission standards will continue to provide a steady flow of students to maintain educational administration programs, leading to low student influence over professors.

In addition to low admission standards, the traditional structure of the school administrator profession is another factor contributing to a relatively low degree of influence by students over educational administration professors. Apart from teaching experience, licensure requirements for administrator incumbents are nearly always dependent on credentials supplied by colleges of education (transcripts and credit hours that must parallel those on a list maintained by the certification bureau of the state education department) [Peterson & Finn, 1988]. Earning a master's degree in education is probably the most common way of satisfying state licensure requirements. Such degrees are awarded in large numbers by many universities, with fewer than 5% of all principals lacking such a degree (Peterson & Finn, 1988). As a result, most students are highly dependent on educational administration faculty for their credentials, and as a result, probably would not exert strong influence on professors to change preparation programs.

Educational organizations and other external stakeholder groups may also have limited influence over the professors. There appears to be substantial evidence to suggest that the training-and-certification sequence for public school principals and superintendents leaves something to be desired (Peterson & Finn, 1988). Practicing school administrators typically judge their university training to have been easy, boring, and only intermittently useful to them in their work. Additionally, there seems to be mounting public

concern about school quality and the importance of the principal's role as an instructional leader. Thus, efforts have been directed at providing opportunities for practicing school administrators to learn fundamental techniques (such as teacher evaluation, interpretation of research findings, curriculum construction, and diagnosis of institutional problems that relate to low student achievement test scores). Although many of these supplementary training programs operate outside the framework of graduate training required for state certification, university-based experts (professors) are commonly engaged to teach in them (Peterson & Finn, 1988). As demand for additional administrator preparation increases, the demand for services by educational professors will also likely increase, tending to decrease the power of educational organizations over the professors.

Threat of Substitutes. As previously noted, university consulting services are commonly used by local and state educational organizations and other external stakeholder groups (Peterson & Finn, 1988). If these organizations and agencies continue to demand university-based consulting services, professors will perceive little threat of substitute products, and thus little pressure to change what they do and how they do it.

However, inservice opportunities may become available from many different sources--between and among educators within the various stakeholder groups. As discussed above, if there is adequate dissatisfaction with the quality and relevancy of the products and services provided by professors, increasingly more of these external stakeholder groups will develop these services and products from within their respective organizations, or will share resources between related organizations (see discussion of stakeholder perspective). Additionally, if legislative groups become adequately

dissatisfied with existing university preparation programs, they may seek to alter existing certification requirements to allow alternative routes to certification, thus circumventing professors of educational administration. Although these substitute services and products are not a substantial threat at this point, the strength of these competitive forces may strengthen if educational administration professors are not sufficiently responsive to preparation program reform.

Summary of Industry Structure Influences

The influence of the industry structure on educational administration professors largely parallels those of stakeholder groups. An important additional factor offered by an industry structure explanation of academic intransigence is the low rivalry and low threat of entrants due to the declining supply of professors relative to the on-going demand. Although the increased bargaining power of professors due to low rivalry and low threat of entrants could be used to change existing academic norms and culture, current trends suggest that this is not the most likely result. Instead, professors may use their increased bargaining power to maintain the status quo in preparation programs. If that is the case, then the only potential source of competition to motivate professors to change preparation programs is in the potential for substitute products and services developed and provided by existing educational organizations and external agencies.

Conclusion

Analysis of academic intransigence in educational administration preparation program reform from stakeholder and industry structure perspectives suggest that there are two factors which may be the most powerful in contributing to academic intransigence. These are: 1) the academic norms

and reward system of higher education institutions, and 2) the low rivalry and low threat of entrants due to the predicted decline in available professors. Although the threat of competition from external organizations to provide substitute products and services is a potential counter-acting influence to academic intransigence, this force is not yet actively mobilized. At present, the prognosis for meaningful change in preparation programs by professors of educational administration is not likely.

As observed by March (1974) in a discussion of the inadequacies of administrator training,

> One of the persistent difficulties with programs for reform in the training of administrators is the tendency to try to improve managerial behavior in ways that are far removed from the ordinary organization of managerial life. Unless we start from an awareness of what administrators do and some idea of why they organize their lives in the way that they do, we are likely to generate recommendations that are naive (p. 56).

This same observation may apply to professors and recommendations for reform in university preparation programs. Unless we start from an awareness of what professors of educational administration do and some idea of why they organize their lives in the way that they do, we are likely to generate recommendations for change that are naive.

The stakeholder perspective suggests that we should be more attuned to the influences of the academic culture and reward system if we are going to make realistic and "doable" recommendations for reform. Similarly, the industry structure perspective suggests that we may need to consider the increased power of professors to maintain the status quo (or influence marked change in academia) as their supply decreases relative to their demand. Current reform proposals have taken minimal heed of these factors when making recommendations for change in preparation programs. Consequently, academic

intransigence within the educational administration professoriate seems likely to persist with respect to preparation program reform.

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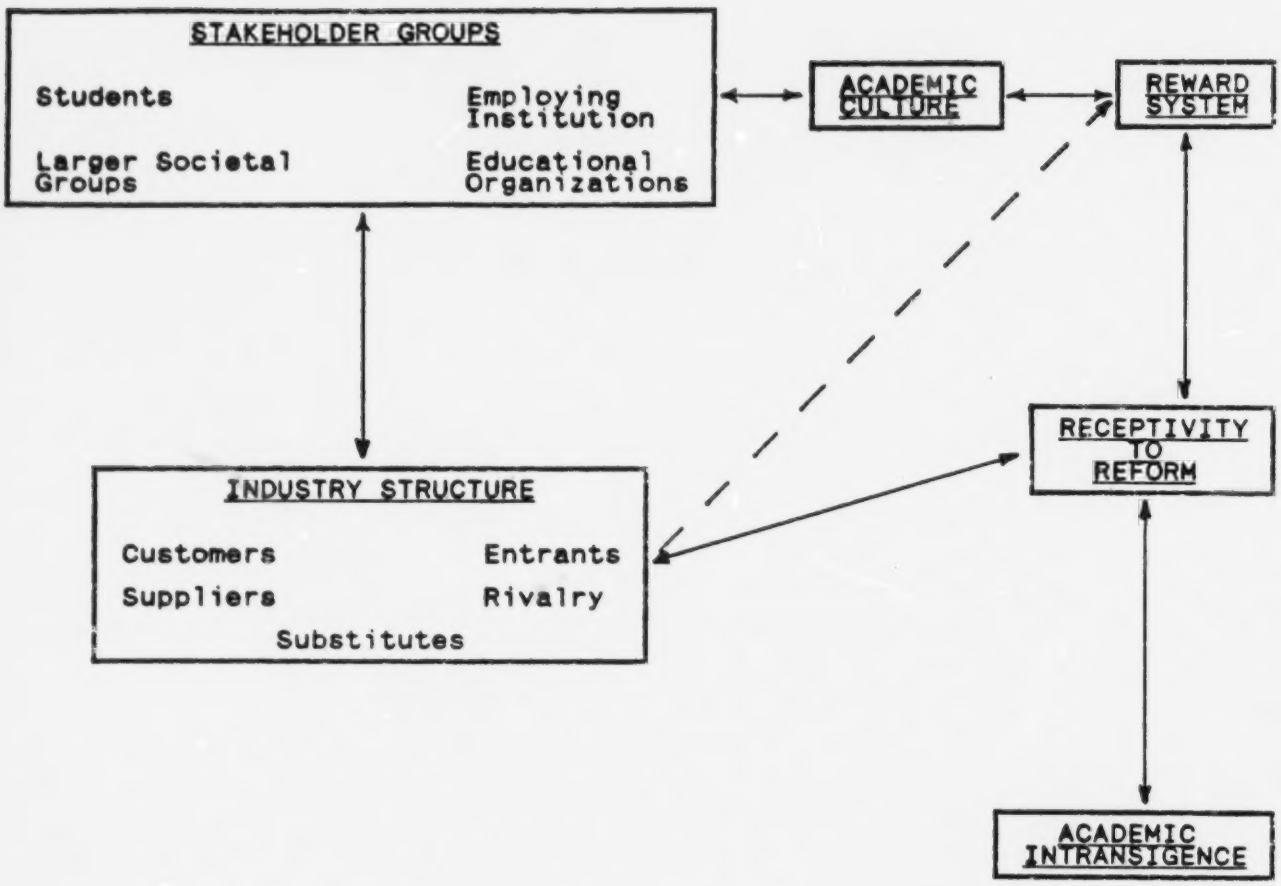

Figure 1. Model of Forces Affecting Academic Intransigence